



Many Voices Working for the Community

Advocate

End Use Working Group (EUWG)

At the request of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (ORREMSSAB) sponsored the organization of an independent stakeholders' group dedicated to making recommendations for acceptable end uses of contaminated areas on the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR). The End Use Working Group (EUWG), in addition to its initial mandate, has developed a set of Community Guidelines, and is currently working on a plan for stewardship and institutional controls for the ORR. The recommendations, guidelines, and stewardship plan will guide regulators and decision makers as they determine appropriate levels of cleanup for the contaminated waste.

Since February, a core group of about 25 diverse stakeholders interested in the future of the ORR has been meeting every other week. Each contaminated area is studied to gain a full understanding of contamination problems, historic waste disposal practices, current land conditions, geology and hydrology of the sites, and costs and risks associated with cleanup. Based on such information and a set of potential end uses developed by the EUWG, the Group decides on the most appropriate end uses for the contaminated areas.

The Group meets at the DOE Information Resource Center in Oak Ridge and is guided by a volunteer steering committee. Membership is open to all stakeholders, and new members are welcome at any time.

Technical, administrative, and financial support is provided by DOE. Phoenix Environmental Corporation of Alexandria, Virginia, provides facilitation and additional technical support to the Group.

Community Guidelines

Community guidelines were developed early on by the EUWG to guide the Group's thinking and to provide regulators and decision makers with some overarching principles to use in making remediation decisions for contaminated areas on the ORR. The guidelines, listed in order of priority, are subject to revision and amendment as the Group's knowledge and understanding of the ORR increases. DOE has agreed to

explain how the guidelines are incorporated, or why they cannot be incorporated, into each of its decisions.

- 1 Contaminated material left on site, regardless of the site's end use, must be controlled to prevent further spread.
- 2 The federal government should work with state and local governments, in consultation with the public, to establish and fund a long-term stewardship program for contaminated lands.
- 3 DOE and its contractors should minimize impacts on the environment during remediation and maximize restoration of the environment after remediation.
- 4 End uses for lands containing residual contamination should include buffer zones that protect current and future nearby populations.
- 5 End use decisions for contaminated lands should not impede the continuing use and development of ORR lands, and should allow for continuing and future employment and research opportunities.
- 6 When siting additional facilities, DOE should use brownfield sites instead of greenfield sites.
- 7 Waste should be relocated only to reduce total risks to human population and the environment.
- 8 Institutional controls in lieu of remedial actions should be used only in cases where DOE has satisfied the community that further restoration is not feasible.
- 9 DOE's program offices must coordinate their activities and end use decisions and should provide for meaningful, broad-based public involvement.
- 10 End use decisions should be re-evaluated as better technologies become available.
- 11 End use decisions should strive to reduce the amount of land requiring long-term control.
- 12 End use of contaminated sites should be compatible with projected uses of adjacent properties.

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Board Members Attend Conference

During the week of May 12 through 16, 1997, three ORREMSSAB members attended the International Conference on Incineration and Thermal Treatment Technologies at the Oakland Marriott City Center. The presence of a variety of thermal treatment technologies at Oak Ridge in both the operational and experimental stages sparked Board member interest in this conference. ORREMSSAB members attending the conference were Randy Gordon, ORREMSSAB Chair; Janice Stokes, Environmental Justice, Health and Safety Committee Chair; and Rikki Traylor, Waste Management Committee Chair.

The conference included an optional field trip to the Combustion Research Facility at Sandia's California site at Livermore. An overview of worldwide opportunities and constraints for the effective use of thermal treatment technologies was presented during the plenary session. Basic and advanced tutorial sessions, explaining design and construction features of various types of incinerators and permitting and compliance considerations for incinerators, were also offered.

The bulk of the conference involved the presentation of papers on various thermal treatments in use or in development in the United States and worldwide. Because of the continuing interest in Oak Ridge in the operation of DOE's TSCA Incinerator, ORREMSSAB members wanted to learn more about incinerator design, operation, and regulations and independently verify DOE's confidence in its incineration program.

A full trip report by attending Board members and a copy of the Conference Proceedings can be found in the ORREMSSAB library.

ORREMSSAB recommendation on Surface Impoundments Operable Unit



DOE/Environmental Management—ORR developed a proposed plan for remediating four surface impoundments on the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) site in Bethel Valley. The impoundments are located in the south-central part of the main ORNL area, just north of White Oak Creek. The ponds, two lined and two unlined, were used as part of the ORNL waste management system to receive and contain various liquid waste streams containing radiological hazardous constituents. The unlined ponds were built in the early 1940s, the lined ponds in 1964. Use of all ponds was discontinued in 1990.

Six cleanup alternatives for the Surface Impoundments Operable Unit (SIOU) site were evaluated in a 1996 feasibility study. After it was issued, an engineering support study and additional characterization information were incorporated into the alternatives. In the resulting proposed plan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, and DOE agreed that three alternatives warranted detailed discussion:

Alternative 1: No Action

Alternative 3: On-Site Consolidation Cell

Alternative 6: Removal, Treatment, and Disposal

ORREMSSAB reviewed the proposed plan and submitted its recommendation on July 9, 1997.

ORREMSSAB assumed for planning purposes that ORNL will retain its role as a major federally owned laboratory for 50 years or more. Thus, remediation should result in a

safe, clean surface area suitable for industrial uses (e.g., parking lot, buildings with no basements, open space) and free of surface area restrictions. Such an end use requires removal of contaminated contents of the impoundments, clean fill, and restrictions on digging and groundwater disturbance. Because the impoundments lie within a busy research,

office, and industrial complex and are a risk to human health and the environment, early remediation is advised.

Alternative 1 - *No Action* is unacceptable because of the continued release of contaminants. The possibility of impoundment flooding remains and the potential risk to human health if the water cover over the impoundment is lost would be at an unacceptable level.

Both Alternative 3 - *On-Site Consolidation Cell* and Alternative 6 - *Removal, Treatment, and Disposal* would prevent continued release of contaminants to groundwater. Alternative 6 is preferable because the contaminated material would be removed and this area would not require future surface use restrictions. This area is desirable for future surface use because it is next to other well developed and highly used areas of the laboratory. Alternative 6 is also preferable because long-term stewardship of the SIOU would not be required.

It is desirable to create as few waste disposal areas as possible. By transporting SIOU sediments to either an on-site waste management facility or to the Nevada Test Site, creating a waste disposal area solely for the impoundment sediments would be unnecessary.

Therefore, ORREMSSAB recommended that Alternative 6, Removal, Treatment, and Disposal, be selected for remediating the surface impoundment. This recommendation is consistent with the End Use Working Group's conclusions for the Surface Impoundments and for the ORNL Bethel Valley area.

New ORREMSSAB board members seated

Eight new ORREMSSAB members took their seats at the July 9, 1997 regular meeting. Created in 1995, the Board is composed of 19 representatives from local communities potentially affected by cleanup decisions, as well as governing bodies and other interested groups. ORREMSSAB meets monthly to discuss and develop recommendations on high-level policy issues, including cleanup strategies, technology development, and long-term waste management issues. ORREMSSAB members also serve on committees that study specific issues in depth such as environmental restoration, waste management, land use and economic development, and environmental justice, health and safety.



ORREMSSAB Board Members, front row: Pat Rush, Janice Stokes, Donna Campbell, Charles Washington, Mary Bryan, Sandra Reid, Lorene Sigal; back row: Rikki Traylor, Bill Pardue, Jonathan Wood, Kenneth Parks, Demetra Nelson, Randy Gordon, Joe Alexander, Jack Bowden, Bob Peelle, Steven Kopp, Peter Hillis; missing: Fred Creswick.

Jack Bowden is a Loudon County resident and a small business owner. He was the owner of Bowden Greenhouses for 35 years. Now retired from the U.S. Army Reserve (35 years), Bowden is a self-employed beef cattle farmer. Jack served as the past president and is a current member of the Lenoir City Chamber of Commerce and is active in his church.

Fred A. Creswick is a Meigs County resident and a retired mechanical engineer. His expertise is in research and development on energy use and emission control of end-use technologies.

Peter Hillis is a Roane County resident and is employed as a pipefitter for Lockheed Martin Energy Systems (Energy Systems) at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in the Radiochemical Engineering Development Center. He is currently pursuing a degree in Waste Management at Roane State Community College.

Steven H. Kopp is a Knox county resident and works as the manager of Environmental Services for Parsons Infrastructure and Technology Group, Inc. He is an attorney with more than 20 years experience in the environmental regulatory field

and the Chair (elected) for the Citizen Advisory Panel–Oak Ridge Local Oversight Committee.

Demetra Nelson is an Oak Ridge resident and works as a senior scientist (biochemist) for Radian International. She is a member of Spurgeon Chapel AME Zion Church, in the Scarboro Community of Oak Ridge. She is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated.

Kenneth E. Parks is a Roane County resident who works as a truck driver for Energy Systems and is a member of the Teamsters Union. He is a former member of Kingston City Council and is currently a member of the Rockwood Electric Board and the Tennessee Auctioneers Association.

Charles A. Washington is an Oak Ridge resident and works as an environmental engineer for Energy Systems in the Clean Air Compliance Group at Y-12. He holds BS and MS degrees in chemistry and is particularly interested in the impacts of DOE's activities on the black community.

Jonathan C. Wood is an Oak Ridge resident. He holds a BS and is an MS candidate in geography and a registered professional geologist in Tennessee.

Learn more about ORREMSSAB

All Board meetings are open to the public. You may call (423) 576-4750 for a recorded schedule of upcoming ORREMSSAB events. Board meetings and special events are advertised in local newspapers. Full ORREMSSAB meetings are also announced in the Federal Register. ORREMSSAB maintains a home page on the World Wide Web. The address is: http://www.ornl.gov/doe_oro/em/ssab.

ORREMSSAB Meeting Schedule

Board Meetings: First Wednesday of each month, 6–9 p.m. Locations may vary, but are advertised in local media and registered on the information phone line.

Project Team Meetings: Generally scheduled during the second week of each month.

All Meetings: For exact times and locations, call the dedicated information phone line (423) 576-4750.

EUWG Meeting Schedule

September 18, 1997 Discussion of WAGs in Melton Valley to identify exceptions to the general end use.

October 2, 1997 Wrap-up of disposal facility, Melton Valley, and Bethel Valley end use recommendations and reporting.

Future meeting schedule to evaluate Y-12, K-25, groundwater, and surface water to be determined.

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Project Teams Replace Committees

At the September 3, 1997 Board meeting, ORREMSSAB voted to replace Standing Committees (Article 7, ORREMSSAB Bylaws) with Project Teams. Project Teams will function much like the committees did — the public gives their input and can help draft Project Team reports and recommendations. There are further opportunities for public participation during the Executive Committee meetings when the reports and recommendations are discussed. The public can also offer input on projects during the public comment period at Board meetings.

Focus Group on New Technologies

On July 30, 1997, a focus group of interested citizens met to develop a process for providing input to DOE on environmental technologies under final development. The focus group will address issues specific to Oak Ridge and how these affect the design and deployment of technologies that may be used here. For example, continuous emissions monitoring, removal of mercury from waste streams, and thermal/nonthermal mixed waste treatment.

Following a presentation by DOE's Mixed Waste Focus Area Group, several attendees suggested strategies for defining the Group's future scope of work and which technologies should be addressed. During a second meeting, to be scheduled for September, participants should be able to agree on a definition of the scope of their work and what background material and other resources are needed.

The focus group is sponsored by DOE's Mixed Waste Focus Area (MWFA), the Oak Ridge Reservation Local Oversight Committee (LOC), and the ORREMSSAB Waste Management (WM) Committee. Local contacts for more information are Susan Gawarecki, LOC Executive Director at 483-1333 (email:locinc@aol.com); Rikki Traylor, ORREMSSAB WM Committee Chair at 690-8432; and Walter Perry, DOE Community Relations Manager at 576-0885. More detailed information is available from Jodi Townsend, MWFA, at 208-526-7818 (email:joit@inel.gov).

